

Mr. Andre van Gyseghem described his activities as Pageant Master to the Empire Exhibition, and urged producers and writers guiding the Bantu to preserve native culture. Miss Bertha Slosberg gave a short history of the work done by the Mtetwa Lucky Stars, the oldest professional troupe in the Union. Mr. John Goldman, technical adviser to the unit which made 'King Solomon's Mines' spoke of the amazing natural acting ability displayed by Africans employed in the crowd scenes.

The conference proved a great success, and it was decided to hold a second conference on African Music in February. Records of native music and specimens of native handiwork were very kindly lent by Miss Slosberg, Mr. van Gyseghem, and Mr. John Goldman. There were a large number of Africans among the audience. (*Communicated by MISS MARY KELLY, of the British Drama League.*)

### *Carnegie Non-European Library, Transvaal.*

This library was started in 1931 when the Carnegie Corporation offered a grant of £1,000 for the purchase of books, provided that local authorities would accept the financial responsibility of maintaining the library, and defraying the costs of book distribution. The library is subsidized by the Witwatersrand Council of Education, the Provincial Council, and several towns of the Witwatersrand.

As Non-Europeans may not borrow books from any Transvaal Public Library to which Europeans are admitted, the establishment of this library was a real necessity. For the distribution of books the Travelling Library system was adopted. The head-quarters library in Johannesburg purchases the books, catalogues them, and sends them out in batches of fifty or more to various centres. Each centre has its own paid or voluntary librarian who accepts delivery of the books and encourages people living in the vicinity to read them. No subscription is charged. In 1934 an Organizer Librarian was appointed; he visits centres, encourages people to read more, gives lectures on reading, and tries to reorganize dormant centres. The Organizer is an African Native.

Books are provided both in English and in the vernaculars. There has been a consistent demand for books in the vernacular languages. The library possesses all the books published in Zulu, Xhosa, Suto and Tswana, but as the total number of works available does not exceed three hundred, the Library cannot, even with multiplication of copies, satisfy the demand. There is also a demand for books in Pedi, Shangaan, and Venda. In this connexion it is gratifying to learn that the Transvaal Education Department is willing to subsidize the publication of books in the vernacular.

Experience in various parts of Africa has shown that as a rule the African is not keen on reading fiction but prefers books which are of practical use

or of immediate interest to him, books dealing with facts instead of with mere imagination, and this is confirmed in this case. He does not read for pleasure only or to while away an idle hour, but in order to learn. Books on social questions, on general education, on simple science, on agriculture, on the life and the past of his own country, on conditions in Europe and America, on history, are those which are in greatest demand. The same is true of biographies—every African is fond of reading them.

At the Conference of Non-European Librarians, Mr. H. Liebenberg, Inspector of Native Education, mentioned some of the obstacles to creating a reading habit among Natives, saying: 'There are few books to read in our Native schools. In other schools you will find a set grade of readers in English. We have few readers in the vernacular. Secondly, most of our schools are so overcrowded that the books are just hidden away in a corner. We have no shelves, no cupboards, no quiet. There is no desire on the part of the teachers or children to read. Most of the children come from homes where reading is not encouraged, where they have to work. Most parents would strongly object if they saw their children reading. There are no quiet nooks and corners in which to read. . . . There are few books to give, and most are too difficult for the Native to understand.' (*From the Second Report, July 1938.*)

### *Bantu Welfare Trust.*

THE Bantu Welfare Trust was founded in Johannesburg in 1936, with a capital of £50,000 and a regular annual income of £1,500, apart from donations. The Second Annual Report, 1937-8, states that the Trustees have continued the policy of confining benefactions to projects having special significance for the advancement of the (South African) Bantu population as a whole, and organized on a national scale, rather than to purely localized efforts. With this end in view, one-third of the regular income was, as in the previous year, granted to the South African Native College and one-third to the South African Institute of Race Relations. The South African College has used the grant in the main for promoting the study of African languages and cultures. The College recognizes the great importance of Bantu students being kept abreast of recent research into their own cultural heritage, and has applied grants to the improvement of the Howard Pim Library by the addition of monographs on African tribes and their languages; it has also made grants to advanced students for research and has organized a series of lectures on methods of study of Bantu languages, of anthropological study and research, of Native economic conditions, and methods of social work among the Bantu.

The South African Institute of Race Relations devoted part of its grant to financing the Legal Aid Bureau established in Johannesburg in 1936, and